



Mountainside Board Of Education

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Mrs. Janet Walling – Superintendent of Schools

Mountainside Parents & Guardians:

January 13, 2022

The New Jersey Department of Health has released new [guidelines for K-12 schools](#) for isolation and quarantine in the school setting. We have evaluated these changes in consultation with the Westfield Regional Health Department and revised our guidelines accordingly. **These changes will take effect beginning on January 18, 2022.**

Specifically, please note the following important changes:

- The **isolation** period for anyone testing positive for COVID, has been reduced to **FIVE (5)** days from the date of symptom onset or the date of the positive test if the student was asymptomatic.
 - A student may return to school on Day **SIX (6)** if symptoms have resolved and the student has been fever-free for 24 hours. If symptoms persist (*other than loss of taste or smell*), continue to isolate and reach out to your school nurse for further guidance. A negative test is not required to return to school.
- The **quarantine** period for unvaccinated students exposed to COVID has been reduced to **FIVE (5)** days. Unvaccinated students may end their quarantine on day **SIX (6)** and return to school so long as they remain asymptomatic. A negative test is not required for students to return to school but it is **strongly recommended**.
 - **Fully vaccinated close contacts do NOT need to quarantine and may come to school** but parents should monitor their child for symptoms and inform the school nurse of any concerns.
- If your child is currently in quarantine/isolation with a return date after 1/18, your child's school nurse will reach out with an adjusted return date if applicable.
- **School Return Protocol (Days 6-10)**
 - All students returning to school after quarantine or isolation must continue to wear a well-fitted mask at all times, both indoors and outdoors, for the next 5 days. **This includes recess, and gym classes.**
 - Students will be excused from gym requirements if the planned activity is of higher aerobic intensity which would require the removal of a mask.
 - Individual mask breaks will be provided if needed for students.
 - Students will be seated a minimum of 6 feet apart at lunch and they may remove their mask **only** while eating or drinking. Masks must be put back on whenever not actively eating or drinking.
 - Students will be excluded from any school activities where they cannot appropriately mask at all times
 - This may include sports, band lessons, etc..
 - If the student cannot wear a mask at all times or does not wear a mask properly (covering mouth and nose), they will be expected to complete a 10 day isolation/quarantine.

Masking continues to be required for **all** students, staff, and visitors within our buildings as stipulated in Governor Murphy's recent [Executive Order #281](#). All other protocols remain in place including those pertaining to international travel and exclusion of unvaccinated students awaiting COVID testing results (their own or a household member).

Taken as a whole, the new guidelines cut in half the amount of time students and staff must be out of school due to either COVID diagnosis or exposure. Thank you for your continued support and understanding of these guidelines as we all work together to keep our schools and community safe and well!

Janet Walling